

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-12 (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A method for detecting the presence or the risk of developing a Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in a bovine or ovine~~an encephalopathy in a mammal~~, comprising determining the presence, in a biological sample from the bovine or ovine~~mammal~~, of a target molecule selected in the group consisting of :

a) a nucleic acid comprising a sequence of SEQ ID NO:1~~selected from SEQ ID NO: 1-26~~ or a fragment thereof containing at least 5, ~~preferably 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10~~ consecutive bases, and

b) a nucleic acid having a sequence complementary to a sequence according to a),

~~c) a functional analogue of a nucleic acid according to a) or b) originating from another species or a natural variant, or~~

~~d) a polypeptide coded by a nucleic acid according to a) to c);~~

the presence of said target molecule in the sample being an indication of the presence or the risk of developing BSE~~an encephalopathy~~ in said bovine or ovine~~mammal~~.

14. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 13, comprising determining the presence of at least 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 or more target molecules.

15. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 13, comprising detecting the presence or the absence of a nucleic acid according to a) to b)~~a) to e)~~ by selective hybridization or selective amplification.

Claim 16. (Cancelled)

Claim 17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim 13, for detecting the presence or the risk of developing BSE in a bovine or ovine, comprising contacting a biological sample from the bovine or ovine containing nucleic acids with a product comprising a support on which is immobilized at least one nucleic acid comprising the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1~~a sequence selected from SEQ ID NO: 1-26~~, a fragment thereof containing at least 5 consecutive bases, or a nucleic acid having a sequence complementary thereto, and determining the hybridization profile, the profile indicating the presence or the risk of developing BSE in the bovine or ovine.

19. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 13, for detecting the presence or the risk of developing BSE in a bovine or ovine, comprising contacting a biological sample from the bovine or ovine containing nucleic acids with a product comprising a primer allowing amplification of all or part of a target nucleic acid such as defined in claim 13, said primer being single-stranded and having a length comprised between 5 and 50 bases, the presence of amplification products being an indication of the presence or the risk of developing BSE in the bovine or ovine.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the sample is a blood sample.

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Claims 21-23. (Cancelled)